CONFERENCE OF THE COMMITTEE ON DISARMAMENT

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FINAL VERBATIM RECORD OF THE FOUR HUNDRED AND FIFTY-FOURTH MEETING

held at the Palais des Nations, Geneva,
on Tuesday, 3 March 1970, at 10.30 a.m.

Chairman: Mr. J.F. LEONARD (United States of America)

(Previous verbatim records in this series appeared under the symbols ENDC/PV.1-ENDC/PV.430).

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1. I AN (United States of America): I declare open the 454th plenary meeting of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament.

2. Mr. ORTIZ de ROZAS (Argentina) (translation from Spanish) 1/: The present session of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament begins under good auspices: it coincides with the opening of the Disarmament Decade and with the celebration of the twenty-fifth anniversary of the foundation of the United Nations. The presence and the words of the Secretary-General in this Committee a few days ago (CCD/450) served to stress the significance of these events and to inaugurate the work of the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament in a setting appropriate to the great efforts incumbent upon it.

3. Like any dimension of time, a decade is a relative period. For some human activities it can be very long. For disarmament it can, on the contrary, prove extremely short. Notwithstanding the earnest desires of mankind, if present trends continue it would be a delusion to think that in ten years this goal could be fully attained. To raise people's hopes with baseless promises or encouraging words not followed by concrete deeds would disappoint the expectations of the international community in a manner deserving strong condemnation.

4. The development of the post-war situation has made it clear that the arms race, far from being halted, has continued and is continuing at an ever-faster pace. There is no need to repeat the facts and figures quoted in this Committee to confirm this statement. Furthermore, if we examine the record of this Conference as it nears the completion of its first decade, we can observe that, notwithstanding the high purposes for which it was created, it has succeeded in completing only some partial and limited measures of "non-armament". It has made no tangible progress even in the limitation of armaments, let alone in disarmament.

5. Therefore, if we want to give the next decade a real sense of purpose, we have every right to expect that all governments -- especially those represented in this Committee -- will faithfully and resolutely devise and put into practice the far-reaching solutions desired and required for disarmament. This is our duty, one more heavily incumbent on some than on others. But we must all join our efforts to

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1/ Submitted by the delegation of Argentina.

(Mr. Ortiz de Rozas, Argentina)

discharge it. The task is not an easy one. Disarmament is mainly a question of confidence. Without a minimum of confidence among the great Powers, international relations will never improve, peace and security will always be threatened, and disarmament will not be achieved -- not in a decade, nor even in a century --, however many proclamations may be approved by the United Nations.

6. Fortunately, during the past few years a favourable trend has begun to develop. The present juncture is favourable and we must take full advantage of it, for similar conditions may well not recur. The dialogue initiated between the United States of America and the Soviet Union is significant from every point of view. In Vienna, where I also have the honour to represent my country, attention is focused on the resumption of the strategic arms limitation talks. It is unnecessary to comment here on the vital importance of these negotiations, not only for both participants but also for mere spectators.

7. An understanding between the two most powerful nations is indispensable for the lessening of international tensions and for creation of the basic conditions for disarmament. That is why we also attach great importance to the cultural, scientific, technical, consular and other agreements that have been reached between the United States and the Soviet Union in the context of a bilateral relation that is developing in a positive manner.

8. However, it is still a matter of concern for the other nations to see how, parallel to this trend, production of more sophisticated, more lethal and more costly weapons continues, absorbing the highest percentage of expenditures quoted here during this session. It would seem that the great Powers have yet to realize how futile and dangerous is the policy of the so-called "balance of terror". And this obviously impairs the confidence which has started to develop in other fields, and endangers any serious attempt at disarmament. We must therefore make an appeal to the Soviet Union and the United States, and encourage them to follow the path of understanding and put an end to their arms race. Only then will our deliberations have real meaning. Only then will come true the hope that the vast resources released by disarmament will be used to promote basic economic development and to overcome the stagnation in which two thirds of the world's population finds itself today.

(Mr. Ortiz de Rozas, Argentina)

9. Various topics will be brought before the Committee on Disarmament in 1970. All of them are of the utmost importance, and it is therefore difficult to establish priorities for their discussion. The Argentine delegation believes that, if an order of proceedings were adopted, it would be wiser to give preference to points that have already been debated at some length, so that we could settle them during the current session.

10. In this sense we think that attention should be given to the draft treaty on the prohibition of the emplacement of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction on the sea-bed and the ocean floor and in the subsoil thereof (CCD/269/Rev.1). Last year, when the draft was submitted to the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament, we explained our position in detail (CCD/PV.445, paras. 37 et seq.). We stated then that, if the instrument was to be really multilateral and generally accepted, some of its provisions would have to be amended, especially those concerning the scope of application, verification procedures and legal safeguards. Wishing to make a constructive contribution that would facilitate the drafting of the treaty, we put forward on that occasion some ideas and proposals and entered into negotiations with those delegations that had expressed similar concerns. Later, at the debate which took place at the General Assembly, we submitted a working paper (A/C.1/997) concerning articles I and II of the draft, and continued our efforts regarding amendments to article III.

11. Most of the statements made at the United Nations on this subject were in our opinion highly constructive. In general they showed clearly that the international community wishes to conclude a treaty on the denuclearization of the sea-bed for the limit it would set to the arms race. But the majority of these countries which, as we all know, do not possess nuclear weapons nor weapons of mass destruction, nor means of emplacing them on the sea-bed, nor even the possibility of verifying violations themselves, nevertheless expect that the final document will offer them at least full guarantees that their rights will be duly respected.

12. It will be necessary to introduce changes in the original text, and to this end we welcome the statements made at the first meeting of the Committee by the representatives of the United States and the Soviet Union, the co-sponsors of the draft, when they said that they will do their utmost to incorporate the proposals

(Mr. Ortiz de Rozas, Argentina)

made on the subject both here and in the General Assembly (CCD/PV.449, paras. 22, 50 et seq.). The Argentine Government expresses once more its willingness to participate actively in the search for a rapid and satisfactory solution so that, in accordance with the second operative paragraph of resolution 2602 F (XXIV) (CCD/275), a text may be presented to the General Assembly.

13. Another problem that causes much concern is that of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons. On this the debate in the United Nations was most instructive. Taking due account of the feelings expressed on that occasion, we should try to find without delay means of prohibiting the production of these weapons. Their main feature is that, unlike nuclear arms, their manufacture does not present many difficulties and can be undertaken by many countries. Hence their danger, not to mention their disastrous effects and the need to find as soon as possible a way of banning them and of making them disappear from the world's military arsenals.

14. The 1925 Geneva Protocol (A/7575, p. 117), although only a limited number of governments have acceded to it and it is confined to prohibition of the use of chemical and bacteriological weapons, has given proof of its great moral force. During the Second World War none of its provisions was violated, and the contending parties were thus spared additional suffering. After the forty-five years of the Protocol's existence, during which new and terrible progress has been made in the development of chemical and bacteriological weapons, the Committee should find in the light of that valuable experience ways and means of dealing with the present situation and of ending once and for all this reprehensible method of warfare. The recent decision of the President of the United States to destroy unilaterally all arsenals of toxins is an important measure which can strengthen that confidence to which we have referred. We welcome this initiative, which together with ratification of the Geneva Protocol may well be the prelude to a broader international agreement in this field. We approach this delicate subject with a sincere will to negotiate and thus to contribute as far as possible to the total elimination of these weapons of mass destruction.

15. The General Assembly has also asked the Committee (resolution 2604 B (XXIV)) to continue its deliberations on the banning of underground tests with nuclear weapons. Argentina has commented on this question in various international forums, and it is unnecessary to restate our position here. Let us only recall that the question of a

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verification system is the most difficult one before the Committee. In our opinion the scientific information available shows clearly that certain low-intensity seismic signals, though registered by national means of detection, cannot be identified as either seismological movements or tests of nuclear weapons. We can only hope that the Powers concerned will be willing to make concessions that could lead to effective verification procedures.

16. This is in our view an obvious conclusion; but it does not mean that we should disregard the real international situation in this field. Although the 1963 Moscow Treaty (ENDC/100/Rev.1) has been regarded as one of the most significant achievements of the past decade, there is convincing evidence[1/] that the annual average number of tests with nuclear weapons has increased since it was opened for signature. It was undoubtedly intended to prevent, or at least to limit, the qualitative development of the nuclear arms race; but this objective was not achieved, as the strategic arms limitation talks show. Nor can we say that proper use has been made of its possibilities for technological development in the interest of mankind. Indeed, out of 245 tests performed since it was signed, only 23 have been nuclear explosions for peaceful purposes.[2/]

17. I should also like to draw the Committee's attention to another task assigned to the Committee when it was created: to seek an agreement on general and complete disarmament under effective international control. Every year the General Assembly adopts resolutions requesting the Committee to continue its work and stressing the urgency of the subject. But the "continuity" of our work is far from being an example of keen interest. Since 1962, when the Soviet Union and the United States submitted their draft treaties (ENDC/2/Rev.1; ENDC/30 and Add.1-3), the heart of the matter has been so largely avoided that both sponsors must now bring their documents up to date and adjust them to the new developments in the international situation and to the significant changes that have taken place in the armaments systems since 1962. The nuclear arms race has created such conditions that bilateral talks

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1/ Stockholm International Peace Research Institute (SIPRI), Yearbook of World Armaments and Disarmament, 1968/69, p. 243.

2/ Ibid., p. 242.

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to limit the systems of strategic weapons have become imperative. The importance of these conversations is self-evident, but a stop at the slippery edge of a precipice must not be a reason for total complacency when the ground is still slippery. It is to be hoped that the talks in Vienna will pave the way for nuclear disarmament in the context of general and complete disarmament under effective international control.

18. We have listened attentively to the comments made on measures for the regional limitation of armaments and, in particular, those on the arms trade. My delegation has spoken on this question in other forums. It is worth recalling that the burden of the arms race — the figures have already been mentioned in this Conference — certainly does not lie on the sale of conventional weapons, often of doubtful offensive value, but is due to the production of all types of armaments, especially nuclear weapons, by a small number of technologically and industrially highly-developed countries. Therefore, if we speak about priorities, these should undoubtedly be aimed as a preliminary and essential step at applying restrictions to weapons of mass destruction as well as to the manufacturing countries. We believe that no one could seriously advocate disarmament of the unarmed while the producing Powers retain their freedom to increase their already-saturated arsenals.

19. In conclusion, I should like to associate myself with the eloquent and convincing message delivered at our last meeting by the representative of Italy, Mr. Caracciolo, who urged France (CCD/PV.453, para. 5) to occupy the seat that belongs to it by right and is always reserved for it in this Conference. My delegation is also convinced that in the present international situation the contribution of France would be a positive element that would give new vigour and weight to the disarmament efforts. We therefore hope that the Government of France, so closely associated with that of Argentina, will reconsider its position and that in the near future we shall be able to benefit from the presence of its representatives in this Committee.

20. These are preliminary comments. At the appropriate time I will take up again in greater detail the topics I have briefly mentioned in this my first statement at the current session.

21. Mr. CHRISTOV (Bulgaria) (interpretation from French): First of all I should like to associate the Bulgarian delegation with all the words of welcome addressed to the representatives of Poland, Brazil, Romania, Japan, Mongolia and Morocco, who have joined us in this Conference for the first time. We also have the pleasure to address our most cordial greetings to Mr. Epstein, the Deputy Special Representative of the Secretary-General.

(Mr. Christov, Bulgaria)

22. The Conference of the Committee on Disarmament has resumed its work at a moment when, to quote the Secretary-General of the United Nations, U Thant, the world is at a critical crossroads (CCD/PV.450, para.10). On the one hand we have to record the unfavourable evolution of the armaments race during the 1960s, the volume of which has been stressed by a number of representatives who have cited impressive figures of military expenditure. It should be added that this unfavourable process of evolution has not been halted -- far from it -- and presents a real danger of further acceleration of the mad momentum of the arms race. The extent to which this evolution has blocked negotiations on disarmament is well known. At the inaugural meeting of this session the two co-Chairmen referred to this fact in almost identical terms by stressing that in disarmament we have not advanced and have not made any substantial progress.

23. However, there is agreement today that the arms race has not contributed and cannot contribute to the creation of that national and international security which is desired by all States. On the contrary, according to the comment made by the representative of the United States, "There is a growing realization throughout the world that the security of nations cannot be enhanced simply by increasing and improving armed forces and armaments." (CCD/PV.449, para.16). We should like to believe that this is a very significant fact which augurs well for the future and offers better prospects for the cause of disarmament.

24. Other positive factors have been recorded which constitute reasons for hoping that this first session of the 1970s will mark the beginning of what might become, during the Disarmament Decade proclaimed at the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly (resolution 2602 E (XXIV); CCD/275), a disarmament race. In the opinion of my delegation, among these positive factors a place of the highest importance should be accorded to the non-proliferation Treaty (ENDC/226*). The Bulgarian delegation was among those which, throughout the preparation of that Treaty, firmly supported the need to block any further spread of nuclear weapons and to put an end to the increase in the number of States possessing them. We are very happy to note the success which the non-proliferation Treaty has achieved and to hear references in this Committee to the role that it is playing here and now as a factor helping to facilitate future disarmament negotiations. We sincerely hope that the forthcoming entry into force of this Treaty will make this future international instrument one of the most powerful stimulants of the disarmament process.

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25. All speakers at previous meetings have emphasized the importance of the talks between the Soviet Union and the United States on the limitation of strategic arms, which, after the preliminary phase in Helsinki, are to be resumed shortly in Vienna. The reasons for this interest are quite evident. Those conversations, of exceptional scope, have already created an atmosphere which we hope will favourably influence the work of our Committee, of which the two Powers act as co-Chairmen. That influence will be felt within the Committee in two ways: by its direct effect on the negotiations taking place here, and by its impact on the international situation. The relation of cause and effect that exists between the political situation as a whole and the possibilities of progress in disarmament negotiations has always seemed to us an evident truth. Every step forward in disarmament can exert a favourable influence on the international climate, just as any improvement in this can directly facilitate progress in disarmament.

26. I have been encouraged to recall this fact by several remarks in a document submitted to us at the 452nd meeting by the representative of the Netherlands, and particularly by its paragraph 12, which reads:

> "The implementation of a comprehensive programme in the field of arms control and disarmament is closely linked with further developments and progress in the overall political world situation. The three cornerstones are: Disarmament, International Security and Peace." (CCD/276)

The interdependence of those three factors is manifest. It is certain that any initiative tending to reinforce security and contribute to a general relaxation of tension will have immediate repercussions on the chances of progress in the solution of disarmament problems.

27. Now that, at the beginning of the 1970s, we are asking ourselves how to make a new start, we are conscious that our chances of success depend in the highest degree on that improvement in the international climate which is followed keenly by the whole world; and we are convinced that it is of primary interest for the cause of disarmament to encourage and support any initiative intended to have a positive effect on the international situation. In this connexion it is undeniable that the convocation of a European conference on security, and co-operation in the spirit of the initiative taken and the proposals formulated in Budapest and Prague by the States parties to the Warsaw Pact, will play an essential role.

(Mr. Christov, Bulgaria)

28. I should like now to make certain comments on the matters submitted to the Committee in the resolutions of the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly (CCD/275). In our opinion two of those questions should be placed at the head of our agenda: the preparation of an agreement banning the use of chemical and bacteriological weapons, and of a treaty banning the emplacement of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction on the sea-bed and the ocean floor. I should like to state at once that my delegation feels that we should undertake discussion of those problems without delay, both because of the importance we consider those matters have at the present time and for pragmatic considerations.

29. These considerations take into account our common desire to achieve concrete and rapid results, the difficulties which may yet arise, the possibilities of success in our work, and of course the fact that the two problems, having been thoroughly discussed in this Committee and in the First Committee of the United Nations, are now at a fairly advanced stage and there is a real chance that their consideration may lead somewhere. I say this because we have no intention of establishing an order of priorities, and even less of underestimating other problems, such as those of general and complete disarmament, the complete prohibition of nuclear tests, and the establishment of denuclearized zones, to which we intend to return.

30. The problem of eliminating chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons, which have been sources of anguished preoccupation for more than half a century, has now arisen with particular force. These arms were banned by the Geneva Protocol of 1925 (A/7575, p.117). Their inhumanity has been clearly demonstrated every time it has been necessary to study and explain their immediate and long-term effects. In this connexion it is sufficient to recall the report prepared by the group of experts (A/7575) and submitted to the Committee on 3 July last year. This report was recommended by the General Assembly to all governments and to our Conference "as a basis for its further consideration of the elimination of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons;" (resolution 2603 B (XXIV)).

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31. I should like to refer to another official document which merits the greatest attention and which, according to its authors, is complementary to the report of the Secretary-General of which I have just spoken. This is a report prepared by a group of eighteen consultants of the World Health Organization and recently published by that Organization here in Geneva.[1] We shall doubtless have an opportunity to return to certain of the highly authoritative conclusions it contains. For the time being I will only refer to some of the conclusions formulated by its authors (pp.10-11):

"1. Chemical and biological weapons pose a special threat to civilians. This is because of the often indiscriminate nature of such weapons,...

"2. The large-scale or, with some agents, even limited use of chemical and biological weapons could cause illness to a degree that would overwhelm existing health resources and facilities.

"3. Large-scale use of chemical and biological weapons could also cause lasting changes of an unpredicatable nature in man's environment.

"4. The possible effects of chemical and biological weapons are subject to a high degree of uncertainty and unpredictability, owing to the involvement of complex and extremely variable meteorological, physiological, epidemiological, ecological, and other factors."

32. We are convinced that another document devoted to this same problem cannot fail to arouse general interest and will be very useful to us when the Committee seeks to carry out the task imposed upon it by the General Assembly: "to give urgent consideration to reaching agreement on the prohibitions and other measures..." (resolution 2603 B (XXIV)). I refer to the voluminous report published by SIPRI, which we have just received.[2]

33. We consider that the work accomplished within the Committee at previous sessions, the debate within the United Nations, and the documents I have just referred to, have exhausted in all its aspects the study of the question of chemical and bacteriological weapons, and that this task of the Committee has been considerably facilitated.

1/ Health Aspects of Chemical and Biological Weapons. Report of a WHO Group of Consultants, Geneva, 1970.

2/ The Problem of Chemical and Biological Warfare.

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34. The first objective to achieve in this task is to prevent any violation of the Geneva Protocol and reinforce it by the accession of all States in conformity with resolution 2603 B (XXIV). The second objective is to conclude an agreement banning the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological weapons and prescribing the destruction of existing stocks.

35. Bulgaria is a co-sponsor with other socialist States of a draft international convention on prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological weapons and on their destruction (A/7655) which was submitted to the General Assembly at its last session. We were very glad to note that this project was welcomed by the great majority of Members of the Organization and by world public opinion. My delegation hopes that, with the help of the other delegations to the Committee, the draft submitted by Bulgaria, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Mongolia, Poland, Romania, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics will take its definitive form.

36. In this connexion let me reaffirm the position of the Bulgarian delegation, which I have had the opportunity of stating during previous sessions. We are in favour of a global and simultaneous study of the indivisible problem of chemical and bacteriological agents of warfare in order to eliminate them completely from military arsenals. This objective can be attained by the conclusion of an agreement prohibiting the use of all chemical and bacteriological weapons without exception and at the same time banning their production and stockpiling.

37. I would like to pass now to another problem which to our mind is even closer to definitive solution. That is the treaty banning the emplacement on the sea-bed and ocean floor and in the subsoil thereof of nuclear weapons and other weapons of mass destruction.

38. A first point to be made, after the extremely animated discussion to which this problem has given rise, is that the international community supports with force and conviction the urgent necessity to halt the arms race on the sea-bed. Consequently the principle of preventing this danger through the adoption of adequate measures is universally accepted.

39. On this basis and with this purpose in view the draft treaty (CCD/269/Rev.1) was conceived and submitted to the Committee on 30 October 1969 by the delegations of the Soviet Union and the United States (CCD/PV.448). I might perhaps mention that

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certain reticences and reservations concerning that draft went beyond the disarmament frame within which the problem should be placed. Nevertheless, we should like to take into account the proposals and suggestions which the Committee has been called upon by operative paragraph 2 of the General Assembly resolution to take into account in continuing "its work on this subject so that the text of a draft treaty can be submitted to the General Assembly for its consideration" (resolution 2602 F (XXIV)). Most of these proposals deserve to be retained because, to our mind, they would essentially tend to place the future treaty in the setting of subsequent negotiations on disarmament and to establish a clear and unambiguous text. One of them, for example, is the request to include in the operative part of the treaty a commitment similar to that contained in article VI of the non-proliferation Treaty.

40. The Bulgarian delegation considers that the conclusion of a treaty on the partial demilitarization of the sea-bed and ocean floor is a first step which will be followed by others leading towards the goal of complete demilitarization of the sea-bed. It was in this spirit that we spoke at the meeting on 16 October last in favour of the transfer of the third preambular paragraph of the draft to the operative part of the treaty in order, as we said, to transform the promise into an obligation (CCD/PV.443, para.35). My delegation will thus continue to support the amendment (CCD/271) submitted by the delegation of Sweden.

41. In the same spirit we support the request of several delegations for an arithmetically exact statement of the geographical scope of the treaty. We hope also that certain suggestions concerning the interests of coastal States and the problems of verification referred to by the Canadian delegation (CCD/270) will provide us with useful elements for the definitive text of the respective articles of the draft treaty.

42. It has been stated on numerous occasions that the Committee's task is not to solve the many problems relating to maritime law. What is important at the current stage is to attempt to complete the draft treaty, if possible during the present session, taking care to amend it as appropriate and, as the representative of the

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Soviet Union judiciously remarked, "to prevent the entry into force of the treaty from being delayed for reasons which have no direct bearing on the aims and purposes of the treaty" (CCD/449, para.53).

43. Those are the comments I wished to make at today's meeting.

44. Mr. ROSHCHIN (Union of Soviet Socialist Republics) (translation from Russian): Among the disarmament measures under consideration by our Committee is the question of banning the production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons. Speaking here on 18 February, the representative of Sweden, Mrs. Myrdal, called this "our most urgent task" (CCD/PV.450, para.51). The representative of Mexico, Mr. García Robles, in his statement at the first meeting of this session, called upon the Committee to submit to the next session of the General Assembly a draft convention prohibiting the development, production and stockpiling of all types of chemical and bacteriological weapons and providing for the destruction or the diversion to peaceful purposes of existing stockpiles of those weapons of mass destruction (CCD/PV.449, paras.76 et seq.).

45. One cannot but share that view and that concern. A solution to the problem of the complete prohibition and destruction of chemical and bacteriological weapons would be of immense importance, from the standpoint both of saving mankind from the horrors of a war in which chemical and bacteriological weapons were used, and of advancing the cause of disarmament as a whole. In its statement of 17 February the Soviet delegation pointed out that the conclusion of such a convention between the States of the world was an important and urgent measure (CCD/PV.449, paras.41 et seq.). The reason for this is primarily that, despite widespread condemnation of chemical and bacteriological agents of warfare, a number of countries are still actively engaged in the development and production of such weapons and their stockpiles are growing to threatening proportions, which makes the use of such weapons in military conflicts more and more probable. Furthermore, it should be borne in mind that chemical and bacteriological weapons have now been created the use of which could cause incalculable harm to human beings.

46. Well-known cases of the use of poisonous substances have caused deep anxiety and the justified indignation of all mankind. Whatever kind of chemical agents were used, whether they were lethal or irritant, tear gases or defoliants, in the final

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analysis all of them were directed against human beings, combatants and peaceful civilians alike. The target of chemical and bacteriological weapons is man. And this, above all, constitutes the exceptionally dangerous feature of these weapons, which insistently poses the question of the need for their speedy elimination from the arsenals of States.

47. The very fact that such weapons exist and continue to be developed breeds mistrust in relations between States and aggravates the international situation. Attention has been drawn to this fact, in particular, by the authors of the report recently published by the World Health Organization on chemical and biological weapons, to which the representative of Bulgaria, Mr. Christov, has just referred. The document states, among other matters -

> "The ... reciprocal fears between nations might contribute in turn to a proliferation of chemical and biological weapons and an accelerated arms race, resulting in vastly increased danger of accidental or deliberate release of chemical and biological agents.
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> "...
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> "As long as chemical and biological research directed specifically to military use is continued, it will be considered necessary by some countries to continue research towards detection of and protection against such agents. This research could in itself point to agents more destructive than those now existing. In view of the power of existing agents in conditions favourable to their use and the possibility of developing new and even more dangerous weapons, it is imperative to find ways of abolishing any presumed need for this militarily orientated research as soon as possible."
> (Health Aspects of Chemical and Biological Weapons. Report of a WHO Group of Consultants, Geneva, 1970, p.20)

48. The demand for measures aimed at the complete elimination of chemical and bacteriological agents of warfare from the life of the human community has now become universal. Governments, politicians, people of different views and convictions and world-famous scientists are insisting on it. Last September a group of Soviet scientists working in the field of medicine stated:

> "We, Soviet physicians, appeal with a firm hope that our joint efforts, supported by all who cherish the peace and happiness of future generations, will be able to save mankind from the threat of chemical and bacteriological

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war ... It is our duty to ensure that the United Nations adopts urgent measures prohibiting the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological weapons."

49. The prohibition of the production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological weapons and their destruction is a timely step which will undoubtedly meet with the approval of world public opinion. That prohibition will be the next logical act after the Geneva Protocol of 1925, prohibiting the use in war of chemical weapons and bacteriological agents (A/7575, p.117), and will eliminate for ever one of the dangerous types of weapons of mass destruction.

50. In its resolution 2603 B (XXIV) (CCD/275) the General Assembly requested the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament to give urgent consideration to reaching agreement on prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and on their destruction. Thus the Committee on Disarmament now has before it an absolutely concrete and definite practical task — that of reaching agreement on the text of a corresponding international convention. The fulfilment of that task is facilitated to a considerable extent by the fact that, on the initiative of the socialist countries, the question of the complete prohibition of chemical and bacteriological weapons was discussed in detail at the last session of the General Assembly. Many delegations expressed their views on this problem and stated in particular what in their view the contents of such a convention should be. The course of the discussion at the General Assembly and its results enable important conclusions to be drawn in this regard.

51. One of these conclusions is that the majority of States agree with the approach proposed by the socialist States: namely the need for a simultaneous prohibition of both chemical and bacteriological weapons. That point of view was expressed in particular by the representatives of India, Nigeria, Brazil, Japan and a number of other States. Thus the representative of India, Mr. Husain, speaking at the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly, said:

"It is the firm view of the Indian delegation that both types of weapons should be dealt with together or simultaneously ..." (A/C.1/PV.1706, provisional, p.19-20).

"... we share the view expressed by a number of delegations that the General Assembly should ask the Conference of the Committee on Disarmament to give urgent consideration to the conclusion of an agreement on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons, and on the elimination of existing stocks of such weapons, taking into account the need for both weapons to be dealt with simultaneously" (ibid., p.22).

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52. In supporting such an approach in this matter, the representative of Japan recalled the view expressed earlier by Japan in the Committee on Disarmament that "chemical and biological weapons have much in common and should be banned all together." (A/C.1/PV.1697, provisional, p.53-55).

53. The representative of Brazil, Mr. Araujo de Castro, noted in his statement at the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly regarding the United Kingdom proposal to ban at first only bacteriological weapons, that --

> "The arguments for that procedure put forth by the British delegation in Geneva and in New York have not been convincing enough to rally a significant number of supporters. Both methods of warfare, chemical and bacteriological, have traditionally been considered in the same context, as, for instance, in the Geneva Protocol of 1925." (A/C.1/PV.1692, provisional, p.21).

In resolutions 2603 A and B (XXIV), which were adopted at the last session of the General Assembly, the question of chemical and bacteriological weapons is in point of fact also considered not separately but as a single problem. As is well known, many delegations in the Committee on Disarmament have expressed themselves, also at its present session, in favour of a joint approach to consideration of the problem of chemical and bacteriological weapons. The representative of the United Arab Republic, Mr. Khallaf, said in his statement of 24 February:

> "As regards the draft convention submitted by the nine socialist countries, we are gratified to note that it is comprehensive inasmuch as it deals with both chemical and biological weapons. This conforms to our basic position on the subject, which favours the treatment of these weapons simultaneously." (CCD/PV.452, para.48)

54. In our view, such an approach to the problem of chemical and bacteriological weapons is a natural and logical one. It is justified from every point of view -- scientific, military, political and practical. Despite certain differences in the very nature of chemical and bacteriological weapons, science at times has difficulty in determining exactly to which of these two types a particular variety should be assigned. For instance, one of the most dangerous varieties of such weapons -- toxins -- can be produced only with the help of living organisms -- bacteria -- and can therefore be assigned to bacteriological weapons. Their production is the production at the same time of both bacteriological and chemical weapons.

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55. Traditionally science has always treated chemical and bacteriological weapons as a single problem. That is precisely how it is considered in the well-known report of the United Nations Secretary-General (A/7575) prepared by outstanding scientists from fourteen countries, and in the World Health Organization's report to which I have already referred.

56. On the military level these types of weapons are also close together. The characteristic feature of chemical and bacteriological agents, namely that they act exclusively on living tissue, is an argument in favour of dealing with them together as weapons of the same type. The ways of using chemical and bacteriological agents and the methods of their delivery are largely similar. Both types of these weapons can be used both on the tactical and on the strategic level.

57. Politically, chemical and bacteriological weapons are also treated as one problem. The decisions that have been adopted on this problem cover both types of weapons simultaneously. The Geneva Protocol of 1925 deals with both these methods of warfare, and it would be unjustified to show a different approach to the problem of the complete prohibition of chemical and bacteriological weapons.

58. Prohibition of the development, manufacture and stockpiling of only one type of those weapons -- for instance, bacteriological weapons -- would have a negative effect also in the sense that it might be construed as meaning that the other type, chemical weapons, was less dangerous and that its development, production and stockpiling would, as it were, be permissible. Moreover, such a solution to the problem -- the prohibition of bacteriological weapons only -- might even to some extent stimulate the development of chemical weapons in those countries which are the advocates of their use and which would thus obtain a basis in international law for intensifying the production of those weapons. At the last session of the General Assembly attention was drawn to this fact, in particular, by the representative of Pakistan, who said:

> "Further, by separating biological weapons from chemical weapons one may be led to the unwarranted interpretation that the use of the chemical weapons is perhaps not so condemnable as that of biological weapons."
> (A/C.1/PV.1707, provisional, p.11)

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The Soviet delegation believes that those are precisely the consequences to which the proposal made by the United Kingdom in its draft convention to ban only bacteriological methods of warfare (ENDC/255/Rev.1), and supported in this Committee by the delegations of the United States of America, Italy and Canada, might lead.

59. In the course of the General Assembly's debate on the question of concluding a convention on the complete prohibition of chemical and bacteriological methods of warfare, a number of States showed considerable interest in the question of ensuring the fulfilment by the parties to it of the obligations laid down in such a convention -- the question of control. Many representatives drew attention in this connexion to the special nature of chemical and bacteriological weapons, the production of which is closely and specifically linked to the production of chemical and bacteriological substances for peaceful purposes. For this reason verification in the form, for instance, of control posts, the dispatch of on-site inspection groups and so on would be simply impossible from the practical point of view since, as several representatives at the General Assembly pointed out, it would be necessary to have controllers in almost every laboratory.

60. The discussion on the problem of chemical and bacteriological weapons at the last session of the General Assembly provided an opportunity of ascertaining the views of many States concerning the approach to be adopted in drawing up a convention prohibiting the production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological weapons, and concerning the provisions that should form the basis of its content. In our view, the draft convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and on the destruction of such weapons (A/7655) put forward by the delegations of nine socialist countries, namely Bulgaria, the Byelorussian Soviet Socialist Republic, Czechoslovakia, Hungary, Mongolia, Poland, Romania, the Ukrainian Soviet Socialist Republic and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics, at the twenty-fourth session of the General Assembly most broadly reflects the views of States regarding the content of an agreement on the complete elimination of chemical and bacteriological methods of warfare.

61. Permit me to make a few comments on the most important provisions of that document. The key articles of the draft convention are the first three. Articles 1 and 2 stipulate respectively that States parties to the convention undertake not to

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develop, produce, stockpile or otherwise acquire chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons, and to destroy or to divert to peaceful uses all previously accumulated chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons in their possession. Provision is made for the diversion to peaceful uses of those types of chemical and bacteriological substances which could be used both for military and for peaceful purposes. Thus the implementation of those articles of the convention would in itself already signify a radical solution of the problem of chemical and bacteriological weapons and the complete exclusion of those weapons from the life of the human community.

62. Articles 1 and 2 are also strengthened by the provisions of article 3, under which the parties to the convention undertake not to assist, encourage or induce any particular State, group of States or international organizations to develop, produce or otherwise acquire and stockpile chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons.

63. Articles 4, 5 and 6 of the draft convention are also of great importance and I should like to say something about them separately.

64. Article 4 stipulates that each State party to the convention shall be internationally responsible for compliance with its provisions by the citizens and undertakings of its country. Under article 5 the States parties to the convention undertake to take as soon as possible the necessary legislative and administrative measures in their countries to prohibit the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and to provide for their destruction. The application of this article of the convention will be one of the ways of guaranteeing the implementation of this agreement and of achieving the aim of the complete prohibition and elimination of chemical and bacteriological agents of warfare.

65. We have already drawn attention to the view expressed by many representatives at the General Assembly that the establishment of any system of verification or control to ascertain whether or not chemical and bacteriological weapons are being produced in any particular country is an extremely complicated matter and unfeasible in practice, bearing in mind the specific features of chemical and bacteriological substances, the production process of which for peaceful purposes does not differ essentially from the process of their production for military requirements. The government of each State party to the convention will guarantee, bearing in mind

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its international responsibility in this regard, that no industrial enterprise and no citizen of that country is engaged in the development and production of chemical and bacteriological weapons and, it goes without saying, that no stockpiles of such weapons are being created in the military arsenals of that country.

66. Also directly related to articles 4 and 5 is article 6 of the convention, which states that the States parties to the convention undertake to consult one another and to co-operate in solving any problems which may arise in the application of the provisions of the convention. Article 6 leaves the States parties to the convention free to determine the principles and the scope of such consultations and co-operation, depending on the requirements that may arise in the course of implementing the convention. The consultations provided for in article 6 will enable the States, in a spirit of harmony, to settle any doubts that may arise in regard to the implementation of the terms of the convention. This is one of the provisions designed to make the convention an effective international agreement.

67. The combination of three articles of the convention -- articles 4, 5 and 6 -- is intended to ensure the observance of the convention by the parties thereto. These articles, we believe, meet the view expressed by a number of delegations at the General Assembly that it is necessary to ensure strict compliance by the States parties with the terms of a convention on the prohibition of the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and on the destruction of such weapons.

68. We listened with great interest to the statement made by the representative of Poland, Mr. Natorf, on 24 February in which he informed the Conference that a group of Polish experts had prepared a proposal dealing with the problem of safeguards, and that after consultation with the other sponsors of the draft treaty the Polish delegation would introduce this document when the Committee tackles the substance of the problem (CCD/PV.452, para.18). In this connexion the Soviet side declares that it is prepared to co-operate with the Polish and other delegations in the search for the most acceptable and effective solution of the problems relating to the complete prohibition and elimination of chemical and bacteriological weapons.

69. On the whole the draft convention proposed by the socialist countries is, in the opinion of the Soviet delegation, a document which can serve as a basis for work to ensure a positive solution to the problem of reaching agreement on an

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international convention banning the development, production and stockpiling of chemical and bacteriological (biological) weapons and providing for their destruction. It is precisely in this way that the Committee would be able in a fairly short time to prepare the text of an international convention which would finally solve the problem of chemical and bacteriological weapons and completely exclude them from the life of the community.

70. The delegation of the Soviet Union, like the delegations of the other socialist countries co-sponsors of this draft convention, trusts that it will be the subject of an all-round and businesslike discussion and that the members of the Committee will display a sincere desire to reach a speedy agreement on this question. Only such an approach will enable us to ensure success in our work.

The Conference decided to issue the following communiqué:

"The Conference of the Committee on Disarmament today held its 454th plenary meeting in the Palais des Nations, Geneva, under the chairmanship of H.E. Ambassador James F. Leonard, representative of the United States of America.

"Statements were made by the representatives of Argentina, Bulgaria and the Union of Soviet Socialist Republics.

"The next meeting of the Conference will be held on Thursday, 5 March 1970, at 10.30 a.m."

The meeting rose at 11.55 a.m.